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Message Text

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FOLLOWING REPEAT LAGOS 9823 ACTION SECSTATE 10 DEC

QUOTE

UNCLAS LAGOS 9823

AIDAC

E.O. 11652 : N/A

SUBJECT: SAHEL DROUGHT

REF : A. STATE 233875; B. LAGOS 5939; C. LAGOS 5722,
D. LAGOS 5082; E. LAGOS 1927

1. BEGINNING JUST SOUTH OF 12 DEGREE NORTH LATITUDE AND EXTENDING ACROSS FOUR NORTHERN STATES DROUGHT CONDITIONS ARE INCREASINGLY SERIOUS AS ONE MOVES NORTHWARD.

2. LATE RAINS AND SHORT DURATION WITHIN THIS BELT SEIOUSTLY REDUCED THIS YEAR'S CROP YIELDS. LOW YIELDS CAME ON LOW YIELDS
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IN PREVIOUS YEARS TO INTENSIFY THE IMPACT OF DROUGHT ON HUMAN

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AND LIFESTOCK FOOD SUPPLIES.

3. START OF JULY RAINS PROVIDED BASIS FOR HOPE BY FMG/STATE OFFICIALS THAT END OF DROUGHT HAD COME AND NO EXTRAORDINARY RELIEF STEPS REQUIRED. HOWEVER, RAIN STOPPAGE ROUGHLY EARLY SEPTEMBER ACCOUNTS FOR PRONOUNCED, CUMULATIVE DROUGHT EFFECTS AT THIS TIME. NUMBER OF STEPS TAKEN EARLIER (E.G., PLANTING FAST YIELDING COW PEAS) PROVED LARGELY INEFFECTIVE.

4. FOOD SUPPLIES FROM SOUTHERN REGION BEING MOVED INTO DROUGHT REGIONS AT INCREASING RATES, PROVIDING SOME RELIEF BOTH ON SUPPLY LEVELS AND HIGH PRICES. HOWEVER, THIS PRESENTS NEW FACTOR IN PUBLIC CONCERN AS SHORTAGES OCCUR IN LOCAL SOUTHERN MARKETS AND PRICES RISE.

5. DETAILED DATA ARE NOT AVAILABLE CONCERNING EXACT CONDITIONS AND MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE AND LIVESTOCK INTO AND ABOUT THE NORTHERN STATES. IT IS THUS DIFFICULT TO ASSESS THE ADEQUACY OF RESERVES OF GRAINS AND FORAGE OR HOW ADEQUATE THE NEW HARVEST WILL BE.

6. WE BELIEVE CROP YIELDS FOR THE REGIONS BEGINNING SOMEWHAT SOUTH OF 12 DEGREE NORTH LATITUDE AND SOUTHWARD WILL BE AROUND NORMAL. HARVEST IS NOW IN FULL FORCE BUT MARKETING IS EXPECTED TO BE DELAYED IN ANTICIPATION OF RISING PRICES.

7. PERSONNEL TRAVELLING IN KADUNA AREA REPORT SEEING INCREASED NUMBERS OF LARGE HERDS OF CATTLE NORMALLY GRAZED NORTH OF KANO. ALSO SEEN WERE LARGE NUMBERS OF MIGRATORY PEOPLE LOOKING FOR FOOD AND WORK. CITY AND VILLAGE STREETS ARE FILLED WITH PEOPLE OF FAR NORTHERN DRESS.

8. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF FEDERAL RELIEF EFFORTS UNDERWAY, BUT THESE HAVE NOT BEEN PUBLICIZED IN ANY DETAIL. SOME MISLINKAGES BETWEEN FEDERAL AND STATE EFFORTS HAVE BEEN NOTED AND IN PARTICULAR UNCERTAINTIES CONCERNING SCOPE OF FEDERAL ASSISTANCE AND PROCEDURES. ALSO, A NUMBER OF LOCAL PRIVATE RELIEF CAMPAIGNS ARE UNDERWAY, THE
EXTENT AND EFFICACY OF WHICH ARE NOT KNOWN. OVERALL, HOWEVER, IT APPEARS THAT LOCAL RESOURCES/EFFORTS ARE SUFFICIENT TO ADDRESS
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THE MORE SERUOUS ASPECTS OF THE SHORT TERM PROBLEM.

9. A LONGER TERM SOLUTION IS OBVIOUSLY INDICATED. FMG, STATES AND EXTERNAL OBSERVERS AGREE THIS WILL TAKE EXTENSIVE PLANNING AND WELL COORDINCATED INVESTMENT OF CONSIDERABLE FEDERAL/STATE/EXTERNAL RESOURCES OVER A NUMBER OF YEARS.

10. HEAD OF STATE ACCOMPANIED BY COMMISSIONERS FMANR

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AND FMEDR NOW ON INSPECTION TOUR OF DROUGHT AREA. PRESS REPORTS OF TOUR EMPHASIZE ASSURANCE OF QUOTE CONTINUED FEDERAL ASSISTANCE UNTIL PROBLEMS COMPLETELY SOLVED END QUOTE. DAILY TIMES, DECEMBER 10, STATES QUOTE MASSIVE RELIEF MATERIALS, PARTICULARLY FOODSTUFFS, WHICH INCLUDE WHEAT, ARE TO BE IMPORTED TO SAVE LIVES END QUOTE.

11. WE HAVE NOT RECEIVED ANY REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE AND NONE ARE EXPECTED (SEE REF E). WE DO CONTEMPLATE PROVIDING INFORMATION TO FMG ON REGIONAL PROGRAMS WHICH MAY BE USEFUL TO NIGERIA, E.G. MIT RESEARCH AND OTHER SAHEL PROGRAMS.
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